



Middleton-
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News Release

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Lt. Governor Encourages Schools to Sign Up for STEP

Program Teaches 5th Graders How to Prepare for Disasters, Emergencies

Schools Can Still Sign Up Until November 30 at www.ReadyWisconsin.Wi.Gov/STEP

MIDDLETON, Nov. 14, 2012 — During a visit to West Middleton Elementary School today, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch encouraged schools across Wisconsin to sign up for the STEP program and help ensure their students are prepared to respond to various emergencies and disasters, from tornadoes to floods to blizzards.

“When disaster strikes, it’s important that Wisconsin communities know how to respond and act quickly,” Lt. Governor Kleefisch said. “The STEP program not only teaches students how to prepare for emergencies, but it also encourages them to share that information with their families. I encourage interested schools throughout the state to sign up for this program and help prepare their students for emergencies.”

Schools can sign up for the program until November 30 at www.ReadyWisconsin.Wi.Gov/STEP.

STEP (*Student Tools for Emergency Planning*) is a turn-key classroom curriculum for teachers to prepare 5th graders for various emergencies and disasters. The program also shows students how to put together an emergency kit and develop an emergency plan with their families.

The program is not only continuing, but expanding this year to reach nearly 10,000 students statewide, thanks to a \$15,000 Innovation & Investment Award from AT&T and the donation of 6,000 first aid kits from Walgreens. West Middleton is one of the new schools the expanded program will serve this year.

“Emergencies and disasters can happen at any time to anyone, and that’s why we think it’s important to prepare our students,” said West Middleton Principal Todd Macklem. “We’re excited to teach the STEP curriculum and give our students the confidence and potentially life-saving tools they need to know what to do in an emergency situation.”

AT&T has a long-standing commitment to disaster preparedness and business continuity, and is the first company in the nation to earn U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) certification for disaster preparedness.

"We know how critical it is to be ready and prepared to respond in the event of a disaster or emergency," said Scott T. VanderSanden, president of AT&T Wisconsin. "Not only are we proud that our network operations are state-of-the-art when it comes to performing both during and after a disaster, but we are also proud to help prepare Wisconsin families to respond to emergencies through our support of the STEP program."

Teachers are provided with all materials at no cost to the schools, including instructor guides, DVDs and copies of student handouts. All students participating in the program will also receive an emergency kit to take home, which includes a flashlight, first aid kit and emergency blanket. The basic lesson is only one hour of instruction, but teachers can expand the lessons to cover eight hours of materials.

Wisconsin became the first state in the Midwest to teach the STEP program during the 2010-2011 school year. Nearly 2,400 students from Wisconsin schools participated in the program during that first year. That number grew to 6,000 students in the 2011-2012 school year, and the goal for this year is to reach 10,000 students.

Participating schools will be notified in December. Curriculum materials will be distributed by the end of the year, and instruction should be complete by the end of the 2012-2013 academic year.

For more information on the STEP program, please visit <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov/STEP/default.asp> to view a STEP video and download a brochure, or contact Tod Pritchard at tod.pritchard@wisconsin.gov or 608-242-3324.

The AT&T Wisconsin Innovation & Investment Award program provides grant funding to organizations and programs that improve the community by: advancing education, enhancing the environment, promoting economic development and new technologies, or delivering other essential community services. This is the fifth grant this year in a new program aimed at supporting local organizations that enhance and give back to their communities.

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